



# **USGBC NJ Chapter**

## **Strategic Plan**

### **2009 – 2013**

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## **Mission**

*To be NJ's foremost coalition in the public and private sectors promoting the planning, design, construction, and operation/maintenance of buildings that are environmentally responsible, cost effective, productive, and healthy places to live, learn and work.*

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## **Background and History**

USGBC NJ has developed its 2009-2013 strategic plan in an environment of rapid growth of “Green” initiatives. These initiatives will dramatically affect the built environment, urban planning, lifestyle and numerous product markets while generating employment opportunities in “Green” professions and trades. In these tenuous economic times, energy, carbon regulation and overall sustainability will dramatically alter energy markets, driving innovation and efficiency across the economy.

President Barack Obama has challenged the staff at the DOE, and all of America, to create a new and effective energy policy. The Green Building community has become the norm rather than the exception. The movement has shifted from grass root groups, to corporate board rooms, and to the Halls of Congress, people now understand that we need to become sustainable.

The economic stimulus money and new energy incentive programs will foster an aggressive series of opportunities to expand Green Building project work. The USGBC has defined Green Building parameters with the LEED Rating System. The New Jersey Chapter of the USGBC has the resources to help the Mid Atlantic Real Estate community deliver truly Green Buildings in a cost effective manner.

NJ State Government has adopted the federal strategy which focuses on the US Economic Stimulus Plan in conjunction with the Governor’s Energy Master Plan - that Green Building will not only impact the quality of our environment but will have a profound effect on the healing of our economy. This initiative is inclusive of all State organizations which will necessitate USGBC’s integration into the task teams that will be developing and implementing Green Policies. These policies will address Green Building guidelines, economic incentives, and Green Collar workforce development objectives.

As the USGBC NJ mission broadens, so must the scope of our strategies and programs evolve. This plan sets forth our strategic vision for the next five years.

In addition to the current Economic Stimulus agenda and State Energy Master Plan, The NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan establishes statewide planning for an aggressive open space preservation policy and Brownfield redevelopment agenda using regulation and incentives to encourage reuse of land that is no longer viable while discouraging use of open space. The goal is to create walking communities and cities where people can live, work and recreate.

With the State Plan, cities would once again become vibrant areas of cultural and economic activity. Planned development in the suburbs would offer a greater sense of community, a choice of housing types, and a more efficient transportation system. The charm and quiet lifestyle of rural areas would be preserved.

The USGBC NJ Chapter’s contributions in effecting change in NJ’s built environment will help to accomplish the goals of the Federal and State Plans. As is recognized, buildings are a powerful leverage point for improving the environment because they account for 65 percent of energy use, 40 percent of materials consumption, and 12 percent of potable water use in the United States. Buildings are responsible for 17 percent of fresh water withdrawal, and storm water runoff and construction site discharges are a leading source of pollution to rivers, lakes

and estuaries. The NJ Chapter is at the forefront of transforming the state marketplace to support green building practices – a proven method of reducing the impact of buildings on people and the planet, while improving economic value for building owners.

The NJ Chapter of the US Green Building Council was officially recognized as a chapter by the USGBC on November 12, 2002 and was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) on March 29, 2005. Since 2002 the USGBC NJ Chapter has grown from 40 member companies to 654 companies with 831 individual members (as of January 2009). In the same period the number of LEED Accredited professionals went from 34 to 1060 (as of 2/09) individuals. Additionally, NJ now hosts 42 LEED Certified buildings with 315 registered commercial buildings and 47 registered homes. The USGBC NJ Chapter has developed a strong educational program for its members and has created strategic alliances with key stakeholders in the public and private sectors that have begun to transform the marketplace. As stated in the USGBC 2009-2013 strategic plan: “Green” is booming. Being green has become mainstream. At the same time, achieving sustainability on a large scale is still very far off...The pace of change must increase...” To that end, our strategies and programs have expanded to address the needs of the State.

Key strategic issues facing the green building community include: \* (USGBC 2009 Strategic Plan)

- Shift in emphasis from individual buildings toward the built environment, communities and broader aspects of sustainability, including a more focused approach to social equity;
- Need for strategies to reduce contribution of the built environment to climate change; Rapidly increasing activity of government in green building arena;
- Lack of capacity in the building trades to meet the demand for green building;
- Increasing need for a focus on the greening of existing buildings;
- Lack of data on green building performance;
- Lack of education about how to manage, operate, and inhabit green buildings; and,
- Increasing interest in and need for green building expertise internationally.

In the next five years, the USGBC NJ Chapter will further strengthen its leadership and organizational structure by expanding and diversifying its board, including the expansion of a high level advisory group that works under the auspices of the board; become financially secure; work with our newly hired executive director to implement our strategies; and, will continue to provide high quality educational programs and networking opportunities.

## **II. CORE VALUES: GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

Along with USGBC NJ’s Mission, the following Guiding Principles provide the foundation for the work of the organization.

- **Promote the “triple bottom line:”** USGBC NJ will pursue robust triple bottom line solutions that clarify and strengthen a healthy and dynamic balance between environmental, social, and economic prosperity. social, economic, and environmental well being. This will be accomplished via Market based transformation of the building industry.
- **Reconcile Humanity with Nature:** What is good for the environment is good for business. USGBC NJ will endeavor to create and restore harmony between human activities and natural systems. The environment as fundamental to human health, prosperity and well being.
- **Establish Leadership:** USGBC NJ will take responsibility for state wide innovative leadership and will support and drive environmental models that lead to transformation of the built environment.
- **Ensure Inclusiveness:** USGBC NJ will foster collaborative and non-partisan processes that build consensus among diverse industry stakeholders. USGBC NJ will ensure inclusive, interdisciplinary, consensus based decision-making with the objective of building understanding and shared commitments toward a greater common good
- **Maintain Integrity:** Performance based solutions grounded in technical foundation and science: USGBC will be guided by the principle to utilize technical and scientific data to protect, preserve and restore the health of the global environment, ecosystems and species.
- **Exhibit Transparency:** USGBC shall strive for honesty, openness, and transparency. (USGBC 2009 Strategic Plan)
- **Foster social equity:** USGBC NJ seeks to elevate social equity as a value and outcome integral to sustainable built environments. USGBC NJ will respect all communities and cultures and aspire to an equal opportunity for all. We will seek to understand the unique need of all members of our community. (USGBC 2009 Strategic Plan)

### III. STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The strategic goals presented here define the priorities USGBC NJ will pursue to further its mission over the next five to ten years and are in alignment with those of USGBC:

- **Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Drive the building sector’s active participation in the movement to achieve sustainable cities and communities.
- **Climate and Natural Resources:** Lead the dramatic reduction and eventual elimination of building construction and operations’ contribution to climate change and natural resource depletion.
- **Green Building Marketplace:** Accelerate Green Building Demand, Delivery and Accessibility.

- **Public Policy:** Advocate for effective and comprehensive green building policy and codes at all levels of government.
- **Organizational Excellence:** Leverage organizational structure and expertise to foster transformation to “Green” for built environments, regardless of income, race, or any other social factor, and we are committed to more fully integrating social equity into our work.
- **Social Equity:** USGBC NJ will support the recognized the need to collaborate with diverse communities, including underserved communities and communities of color, and to be proactive in advancing social equity objectives. USGBC NJ will seek to coordinate with USGBC; established a Social Equity Task Force to explore opportunities related to this priority and *“support and catalyze the market transformation required to achieve its mission ”across all communities and cultures.* (USGBC 2009 Strategic Plan)

## IV PROGRAM: HOW USGBC NJ ACHIEVES ITS GOALS

**Education and Training:** “USGBC NJ will continue to raise awareness of critical issues and build capacity among a wide range of sectors within the building community, as well as those who purchase, manage, operate, maintain, and regulate buildings”. (USGBC 2009 Strategic Plan)

The USGBC NJ will continue to elevate the understanding of green buildings to professionals, public policy stakeholders and the general public.

Objectives:

- Create awareness of methodologies to drive down net building-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including those related to transport, materials, water-use, and building systems, through LEED certification and complementary tools and programs.
- Create awareness and education that will serve towards goals that reduce natural resource depletion by transforming building and community design and construction paradigms through LEED certification and the promotion of holistic life-cycle assessment and regenerative / restorative design in the building community.
- Increase access of underserved populations to the benefits of green building by educating building owners and occupants in underserved areas and mobilizing public and private capital for green building projects that will directly benefit underserved populations. (*Education and Advocacy*)
- Promote USGBC LEED Products. Continue to organize LEED Workshops for NC, EB, CI, H, ND and Schools as needed in collaboration with USGBC.
- Continue to present educational programs that compliment green building, e.g. Labs and Energy Star.
- Continue to present high quality educational programs.
- Promote green building practices to the general public. Expand the use of the Speaker's Bureau to present in public forums such as libraries and Rotary clubs.
- Develop educational programs that will connect the Green building industry to mainstream Environmental Education by working with the NJ Department of Education science division and Vocational-Technical and Career Programs.
- Extend the Educational pipeline to the formal and informal education community by promoting the following:
  - Establish mentoring programs for high school students in the green building industry that will include Emerging Green Builders (EGB) members and continue through the corporate level.
  - Participate in local and regional Career day events to promote careers and workforce development in the Green Building industry.

- Establish internships programs for High School and University students
- Establish national sustainability design competitions for High School and University students. EGB to include with local or regional High Schools students
- Establish relationships with museums and other informal education institutions to display, demonstrate, and promote the importance of Green Building practices.
- Encourage USGBC members to host and sponsor student field trips to High Efficient Green Buildings for a visual, hand-on demonstration of sustainability.
- Establish the use of Videoconferencing and web cast events as a means to extend Green Building practices to a much larger audience.
- Establish career day with appropriate institutions.
- Highlight, promote and recognize projects/developers/builders/owners that represent our goals.

**Advocacy:** “USGBC NJ will continue to expand its platform of direct advocacy both for comprehensive efforts to transform the built environment and for particular legislative or regulatory outcomes” – and to increase adoption of LEED in New Jersey.

Objectives:

- To research and identify construction markets and trades in the state including higher education, corporate, construction trades, urban redevelopment and energy master plan. Prioritize each area for advocacy, program and education committees. Increase effective strategic alliances. Specifically create alliances with key organizations that have constituents who can work with USGBC to further our position and policies.
- Increase stakeholder awareness and demand. Increase influence on public policy initiatives at the three levels of government; State, County, Local.
- Collaborate with relevant quality of life initiatives and advocates to integrate the theories and practices of social justice with those of sustainable building. Increase access in underserved areas and mobilize public and private capital for green building projects.
- Take advantage of the synergy available through educational and promotional opportunities with other key organizations by providing sponsorship, speaker, programs or educational support including the NJ Center for Green Building (at Rutgers) and NJ Green Homes.
- Reduce institutional and commercial barriers to LEED adoption by developers, builders and owners.

- Increase the coordination between the Chapter's and national's advocacy efforts.

**Membership / Communication / USGBC NJ as Community:** The USGBC NJ Chapter will be an accessible and exciting forum for everyone engaged in the built environment and communities.

Objectives:

- Diversify and increase our membership to 1,000.
- Continue to develop and expand USGBC NJ North, Central and South Branch development which has realized significant momentum and foster their growth to continue and expand their influence on local initiatives and chapter membership.
- Annually review National member list and solicit local chapter members from corporate members that are not represented in the chapter.
- Annually review list of individuals who attended at least one of our chapter Programs / events and recruit those who are not members.
- Review list of LEED Accredited Professionals and recruit those who are not members.
- Increase the level of participation of each member.
- Develop incentives for members to participate in chapter programs / events, e.g. provide free entrance to programs for volunteering time.
- Strengthen communication across all parts of the organization through strategic email bullets and newsletter.
- Maintain and execute a media relations strategy e.g. identify key magazines to publish articles on LEED, write letter to the editor on LEED.
- Continue to fund and sustain a media strategist to create consistent media presence and buzz with clear consistent message points. This will drive sponsorship, education, program and membership.
- Ensure effective dialogue with all affected stakeholders.
- Sponsor informal networking opportunities for all members.
- Implement a regional strategy, e.g. north, central and south, to provide services to all New Jersey members. This would include the creation of regional liaisons (Regional VPs) in each of the three regions.
- *Collaboration and Outreach :*

- “USGBC NJ will continue to create partnerships, forge alliances, and build coalitions, a collaborative approach intrinsic to USGBC NJ values.
- Collaborate with relevant social justice and quality of life initiatives and advocates to integrate the theories and practices of social and economic justice with those of sustainable building.)

## **Management /Organizational Excellence and Fiscal Solvency**

USGBC NJ will be an effectively led, managed and well governed organization.

### Objectives:

- Increase operational and organizational effectiveness through clearly defined roles, responsibilities and priorities across the organization.
- Provide clear roles and responsibilities for all volunteer and professional positions and bodies of the organization\* and ensure effective coordination, communications, and linkage among them.
- Align, harmonize, and coordinate chapter, regional, and national level goals, structure, functions and communications.
- Evaluate NJ Chapter’s by-laws, roles and responsibilities for Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Past Chair, Program Chair, Communications Chair, Membership Chair, Sponsorship Chair, Finance Chair, Education Chair. and communication policies and procedures annually. Post all on web site.
- Annually revisit the Strategic Plan to determine immediate priorities. Use this to develop the top five Action Items to be reviewed at monthly board meetings.
- Nominations Committee will annually identify what skills, connections or resources are needed from the Board and create a recruiting plan to fill available positions to fill these needs.
- Expand Advisory Board to incorporate the diverse areas of expertise that reflect and represent our stakeholders. List this group on letterhead. Invite them to bi-annual strategic planning meetings.
- Provide ongoing Board and staff training.
- Diversify the USGBC board, staff, volunteer leadership, and membership to provide broader perspective and engagement.
- Hold full Board and Executive Committee meetings monthly and bi-annual strategic planning meetings.
- Clarify action items as to board responsibilities and staff

responsibilities

- Provide staffing as needed to support programs and as funding allows.
- Continue to support newly appointed Executive Director by active board and available resources to accomplish objectives.
  
- Secure adequate office space and equipment for Executive Director, Chapter Coordinator and other staff as needed.
  
- Ensure open communications, understanding and ethical practices across all parts of the organization.
  
- Follow dynamic governance model of decision making when practical.  
Approved by USGBC NJ Board on June 14, 2006

**USGBC NJ will be a fiscally sound organization:**

Objectives:

- Create a budget annually and review same budget bi-annually.
  
- Implement the fundraising plan outlined in the 2006 Business Plan to fund an Executive Director for a period of three years and to maintain chapter coordinator position.
  
- Develop existing sources of earned revenues while cultivating new sources, e.g. LEED workshops, Labs21 Workshops, Energy Star Workshops.
  
- Develop and promote workshops with content which New Jersey will “own,” and from which it will retain 100% of net income, e.g. High Performance Redevelopment.
  
- Increase and diversify sources of contributed income.
  
- Develop and implement a plan for year-round solicitation of grants from State, regional and national foundations.
  
- Continue to organize a major annual fundraising event (i.e. Gala) and others (i.e. golf outing) depending on the fundraising needs of the organization, e.g. Gala.

**RESEARCH:**

Objectives:

- To foster the collection of data and performance of buildings,

- To foster the collection of data on the effects of building on occupants, on the environment, and on the economy.
- To demonstrate and quantify the benefits that high performance buildings provide.
- To demonstrate the financial costs and return on investments in constructing green buildings.

## **V. IMPLEMENTATION**

The goals presented are not intended to be tactical in nature. They are intended to propose how USGBC NJ will work toward achievement of those goals during the next five years. Identification of specific actions will be identified and established by staff in annual work plans.

The Board and Executive Committee will initiate activities associated with implementation of the plan in coordination with annual planning and budget cycles. Staff will establish metrics and criteria for Board review. These metrics and criteria will be used to evaluate progress on objectives over the next five years.